

Wilmington VA Medical Center

Virtual Veteran Town Hall

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Wilmington VA Medical Center



August 12, 2021

Agenda

- Director Kane Remarks
 - Don't Delay Essential Care
 - Suicide Prevention
 - Facility Updates
 - Hiring
 - CPAP Recall
 - Copayments Beginning 10/1
- COVID-19 Vaccine Updates
- Flu Vaccines
- Referral Coordination Team
- My HealthVet Account Upgrades
- Health Chat
- 9/11 20th Anniversary
- Open Forum/Questions

Director Remarks

Vince Kane

Director, Wilmington VA Medical Center



Do Not Delay Essential Care

Schedule Your Appointments Now

- Our main Medical Center and five Community Based Outpatient Clinics continue to be open, safe and ready for your care.
- Please call ahead to notify us of your health care needs at **1-800-461-8262, select Option 2.**
- During this time, we want to discourage “walks-ins” and prefer that all care be scheduled.
- ***Please schedule all your appointments including blood work and x-rays prior to coming to any of our facilities.***
- We will do our best to consolidate all of your care into one visit.

Suicide Prevention

- Flags for the Forgotten Soldiers Event in NJ ([Read full story](#))
- Keep Our Veterans Alive (KOVA) partnership in New Jersey / ([Read full story](#))
- Governor's Challenge on Suicide Prevention in NJ
- Working with Delaware state leadership for a Governor's Challenge
- Sept. Suicide Prevention Awareness Month



Do Not Delay Essential Mental Health Care

Reach Out

- Veterans in crisis should connect with the Veterans Crisis Line 24/7 to reach caring, qualified responders by calling **1-800-273-8255**, then pressing **1**, or by texting **838255**.
- Veterans and their families also can find resources at www.veteranscrisisline.net.
- Veterans enrolled in VA health care at the Wilmington VA Medical Center can call **1-800-461-8262** (Option **2**) or use MyHealthVet at www.myhealth.va.gov to schedule an in-person or virtual appointment.



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Atlantic County CBOC to relocate, expand services in 2023

- New construction of 30k sq. feet, current size is 10k.
- Will include: primary care, women's health, phlebotomy, specialty care, optometry, physical medicine & rehabilitation, telehealth, **radiology**, home-based primary care and care in the community.
- Will open down the street from the current clinic. Current clinic will remain operational until new clinic is available.



Hiring Clinical Staff

- We are actively hiring for positions throughout our medical center and CBOCs to meet the rising need with recent expansion of care and the opening of new CBOCs.
- Specifically:
 - Primary care
 - Mental health
- We are the only medical center in VISN-4 to show growth during FY21.

CPAP Recall



SystemOne

DreamStation

- Recall of some Philips Respironics Positive Airway Pressure devices (CPAP or BiPAP) used for sleep apnea.
- Breakdown of the foam used to reduce sound & vibration.
- Breakdown may be due to extreme heat and humidity or the use of unapproved cleaning devices.

VA requests that you register your device through the Philips Respironics patient portal at:

- **Web:** www.philipssrcupdate.expertinquiry.com
- **Phone:** 877-907-7508

Philips Respironics will send a replacement device. ***This may take several months.***

Reporting respiratory symptoms

If you are having any new respiratory symptoms, contact your Primary Care team at the VA immediately.

Reporting device problems

If you are having any problems with your device, contact us at **800-461-8262**.

VA Veteran Information site: www.patientsafety.va.gov/safety-notice/philips-cpap-recall.asp

Resumption of Copayments Beginning Oct. 1, 2021

In March 2021, Congress passed the American Rescue Plan (ARP) and President Biden signed it into law. As a result, all copayments for medical care and pharmacy services provided during the period of **April 6, 2020, through Sept. 30, 2021, are canceled, along with any fees or interest.**

Unless additional legislation passes, copayments will resume for medical care and pharmacy services provided on or after Oct. 1, 2021.

- www.va.gov/coronavirus-veteran-frequently-asked-questions/#benefit-and-copayment-debts
- www.va.gov/health-care/copay-rates/
- <https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/86584/va-medical-pharmacy-copayments-cancelled-sept-30-2021/>

COVID-19 Vaccines

Robert Measley, MD

Chief of Medicine & Infectious Diseases

Loan Vu, PharmD

Chief of Pharmacy

COVID-19 Delta Variant

Over the past month, the Delta variant has rapidly spread and expanded in the United States. It is quickly becoming the dominant SARS-CoV-2 strain causing infections in the US and it is leading to a rise in hospitalizations and deaths.

- The Delta variant, which has caused great devastation across India, spreads more easily and quickly than other variants.
- An increase in the number of cases will continue to put more strain on healthcare resources, lead to more hospitalizations, and potentially more deaths.
- In the UK, **COVID-19 vaccines have shown excellent effectiveness in preventing hospitalization from the Delta strain for persons who are fully vaccinated.**

COVID-19 Vaccines are Safe & Effective

- COVID-19 vaccines have been in wide use in and outside of the United States since December 2020 ***and have been under the most intense safety monitoring in U.S. history***
 - COVID-19 vaccines are **safe**
 - Millions of people in the United States have received COVID-19 vaccines.
 - CDC, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and other federal agencies are monitoring the safety of COVID-19 vaccines.
 - COVID-19 vaccines are **effective**. This includes preventing severe disease, hospitalization and death from newer variants including Delta.
 - COVID-19 vaccines are **recommended**
 - CDC recommends everyone 12 years and older get vaccinated as soon as possible to help protect against COVID-19 and the related, potentially severe complications that can occur.
- Delay of COVID-19 vaccination puts our community at risk.



COVID-19 Vaccination Status

Total Vaccines Administered

- More than **35,000** total doses to Veterans, Veteran spouses & caregivers, adolescents of Veterans and staff
- More than **75%** of those who get primary care service from us
- ***Vaccines still available for those who have not yet received and are encouraged to get one to keep our communities safe.***

Current COVID-19 Vaccination Criteria

www.va.gov/wilmington-health-care/programs/covid-19-vaccines/

- **Veterans:** Anyone who served in the U.S. military is eligible to be vaccinated through VA.
- **Spouses of a Veteran:** Spouses and surviving spouses.
- **Caregivers of a Veteran:** For COVID-19 vaccine eligibility, we define a caregiver as a family member or friend who provides care to a Veteran.
- **Adolescents ages 12 -17 who are caregivers of Veterans are eligible to receive the Pfizer vaccine.**

All minors must be accompanied by their parent(s) or legal guardian when receiving the vaccine.



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Where to Get a COVID-19 Vaccine

www.va.gov/wilmington-health-care/programs/covid-19-vaccines/

Medical Center – By Appointment & Walk-ins

- Mon. – Fri. 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

CBOCs – ***By Appointment Only***

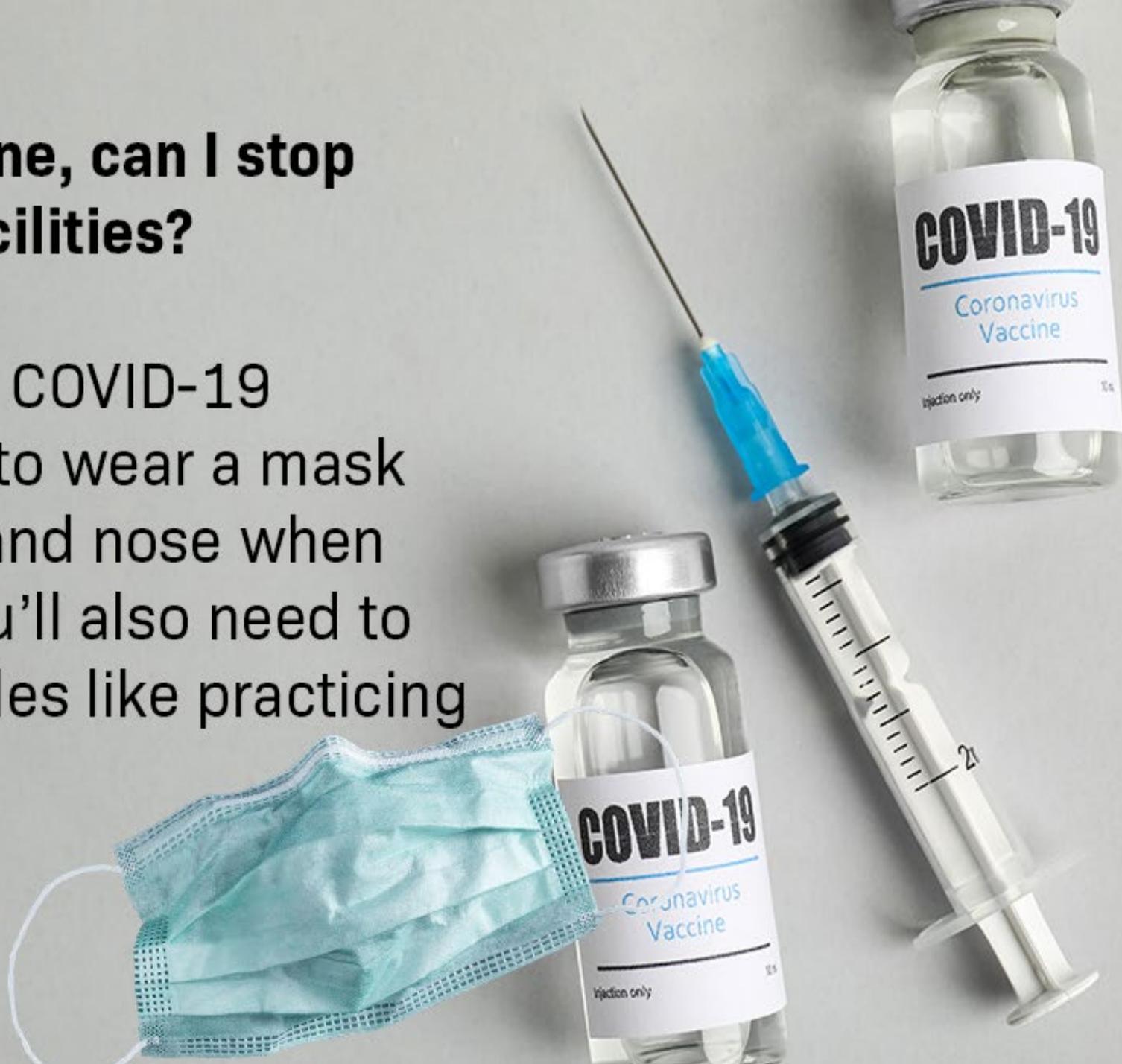
- Kent County – Fridays
- Sussex County – Wednesdays
- Atlantic County – Fridays
- Cape May County – Fridays
- Cumberland County – Fridays



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If I get a COVID-19 vaccine, can I stop wearing a mask in VA facilities?

No. Even if you receive a COVID-19 vaccine, you'll still need to wear a mask that covers your mouth and nose when you're in a VA facility. You'll also need to follow other VA safety rules like practicing physical distancing.



VA



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Flu Vaccinations

- It is imperative that you get your flu vaccination this year to avoid a preventable illness.
- We are finalizing plans for this year's flu clinic and are tentatively scheduled for the end of Sept. through the beginning of Nov.
- Additional details will be communicated in the coming weeks.



Referral Coordination Team

Joshua Leslie
Group Practice Manager



Referral Coordination Team

➤ Purpose

- Inform veterans of available care options (locations/modalities)
- Schedule VA appointments
- Capture scheduling preferences for Community Care
- Develop + execute processes that are mutually beneficially to everyone
 - ✓ Patient
 - ✓ PC
 - ✓ Specialty



My Health^eVet Account Upgrades

Mary Gallagher

My Health^eVet Program Coordinator



My Health eVet Advanced Account Discontinuation



On September 1, 2021, My Health eVet Advanced accounts will be discontinued.

If you have an Advanced account and do not upgrade to a Premium account, your account will revert to a Basic account and you will lose access to the pharmacy features, including the ability to request and track your VA prescription refills.

You can upgrade your account in person at the medical center or at each CBOC.

- **Medical Center:** Visit the MHV office, room #1232, on the first floor, daily, Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m.
- **CBOCs:** Staff will be onsite to authenticate and upgrade Veterans.

[Upgrade to a Premium Account - My Health eVet \(va.gov\)](https://www.va.gov/myhealthvet/upgrade-premium)



My Health eVet Overview



- Gives Veterans access to their care 24/7
- **Prescription refill is the most popular feature on MHV**
- Veterans can refill prescriptions as needed

My Health eVet Account Types



- **Basic** for employee non-Veterans/non-Veterans
- **Advanced** account for Veterans just enrolling who can do Prescription Refill, the MHV Health Library and most of VA Apps
Advanced Accounts will be downgraded as of Sept. 1, 2021.
- **Premium Accounts** for authenticated Veterans who have had one time in-person or virtual authentication using a VIC, State issued DL, US Passport, Federal, State or Local government ID to verify who they are.



Upgrading My Health eVet Account



- **Deadline:** September 1, 2021
- **Online:** on www.myhealth.va.gov
- **In-person:**
 - **Wilmington VAMC:** 1st floor, room 1232, (M-F, 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.)
 - **CBOCs:** Can update accounts at each CBOC during normal business hours.
- **Phone | Email:** Call Mary Gallagher at 302-357-2650 or email at mary.gallagher2@va.gov to schedule a virtual appointment (no personal information on email, please. Send me your cell # and I will call you).
- **VA Video Connect:** If you are on a VA Video Connected appointment with your VA provider or staff, tell them to add me, Mary Gallagher, to the appointment so I can upgrade you
- **Scheduled Visits:** If you are visiting your nurse, ask her/him to IM me so she can Verify your ID, and I can authenticate/upgrade your MHV Account to premium status
- Michael Selby, our Connected Care Manager, can also authenticate your MHV account to Premium status



Health Chat App for Veterans

“When in doubt, chat it out.”

Lisa Capuano-Olson, NP



www.va.gov/wilmington-health-care/programs/va-health-chat/

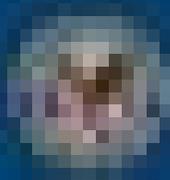
VA Health Chat

for Veterans

[Click to Play Video](#)



VA



Department of Veterans Affairs

Health Chat App for Veterans

Veterans can use VA Health Chat for immediate answers when they:

- Need medical advice for a minor injury or illness.
- Feel ill and unsure about going to an ER or clinic.
- Have questions about your medications or need a refill.
- Have questions about your consults.
- Looking for results of lab or imaging tests.



Connect with VA staff over chat.

mobile.va.gov/app/va-health-chat

**VETERAN**

My Healthcare Services

**PROVIDER**
VAHealthChat**VETERAN** 11:00 am

Hi, I'm worried I have something wrong with my leg and I'm hoping you can help me

**PROVIDER** 11:01 am

Of course, I'm Dr. **PROVIDER** and that's what I'm here for—what's going on with your leg?

**VETERAN** 11:02 am

Well, I noticed it was starting to hurt a couple days ago, but I thought it was because I was standing a lot. It's hurting more today and it's red and swollen.

**PROVIDER** 11:04 am

Which part of your leg is hurting?

**VETERAN** 11:05 am

It's my left lower leg, below my knee. I noticed it's worse today and that's why I contacted you.

**PROVIDER** 11:06 am

Are you feeling short of breath, or having chest pain? Have you been traveling?

**VETERAN** 11:07 am

None of those. It's just my leg. No traveling.

**PROVIDER** 11:09 am

Have you hit your leg, or cut it recently? Any fevers?

Health Chat App for Veterans Resources

Wilmington VAMC Health Chat page

- www.va.gov/wilmington-health-care/programs/va-health-chat/

Download the app from VA Mobile App site

- <https://mobile.va.gov/app/va-health-chat>

Log into the app directly from your browser

- https://veteran.mobile.va.gov/wayf/v2/index.html?redirect_uri=/cirrusmd/&scope=VETERAN

Watch the YouTube video

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WzibuuD0_Jk



20th Anniversary of 9/11

Miguel Marcos

Post-9/11 (M2VA) Program Manager



20th Anniversary of 9/11

The events of Sept. 11, 2001, called brave men and women to serve their country in the Armed Forces. VA remembers your service and your sacrifices.

Our Post-9/11 Veterans team is here to help you navigate VA services and support you through your transition to civilian life and beyond.

The week of Sept. 7-10, we will be holding a virtual remembrance ceremony and have resource tables set up at the medical center and each of our CBOCs.

Specific event information will be posted to our website and on our social media channels closer to the week of events.



Follow us on social media and sign up for our email list to get the most up-to-date information.

- www.va.gov/wilmington-health-care/
- If you would like to receive News and Announcements and Emergency Alerts from Wilmington VA Medical Center, please subscribe to our [email list](#) .
- Follow @WilmingtonVAMC on

 [Facebook](#)

 [Twitter](#)

 [Instagram](#)

Open Forum / Questions

We will unmute the lines and answer any questions that came up in the chat box during the presentation.

If you have a question about a personal health-related issue, please hold it and it can be addressed offline.